DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 199 512 CE 028 333

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TITLE Developing a Comprehensive Cooperative Education Program: Implementing the Plan.
INSTITUTION National Commission for Cooperative Education, Boston, Mass.
SPONS AGENCY Department of Education, Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE [80]
NOTE 19p.; For related documents see CE 028 336-338.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS College Credits; College Faculty; Colleges; *Cooperative Education; *Cooperative Programs; Employer Employee Relationship; Guidelines; *Higher Education; Job Development; Job Placement; Orientation; Personnel Selection; *Program Development; *Program Implementation; Publicity; Recordkeeping; Student Participation; Student Placement; Student Recruitment; Universities

ABSTRACT

This paper is one in a publication series containing general knowledge which can help colleges and universities in the various phases of developing comprehensive cooperative education programs (see note). It discusses fundamental factors that must be considered in implementing a cooperative plan and gives guidelines for putting into effect the stage three implementation plan/budget discussed in CE 028 337. Among the implementation areas addressed are publicizing the decision and plan to adopt a comprehensive cooperative education program, designing the calendar and scheduling courses, seeking technical assistance, orienting faculty and administration, marketing the institution and its cooperative program, recruiting students to the campus, recruiting students to the cooperative education program, setting criteria for student participation in cooperative education programs, hiring director and staffing the program, hiring and training staff, determining registration procedures, establishing employment program, developing jobs, placement process, maintaining employer relations, counseling and preparing students for work, awarding academic credit, developing and maintaining forms and records, building relationships with other departments, building relationships with faculty, and organizing and using an advisory committee. (YLB)

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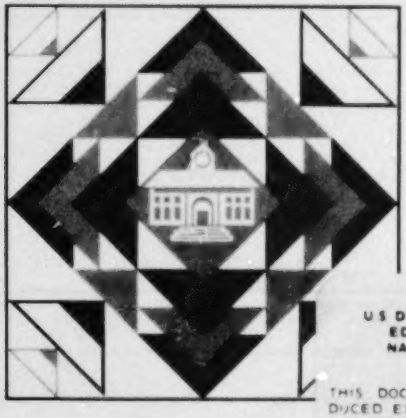
Developing a Comprehensive Cooperative Education Program

IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN



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CE 028 353

Preface

The success of a cooperative education program at a college or university depends in large part on the manner in which the program is structured and the care that is taken in implementing the plan. Each system must be designed to suit the individual character of the institution, yet in every instance there are certain fundamental factors that must be considered. In the following pages many of these factors are discussed, such as credit policies, calendar design, centralized vs. decentralized program structure, costs and income, and others. The pros and cons of the various approaches are presented, and recommendations are made, based on the diverse experiences of other institutions. Neither the issues addressed here nor the discussion of their many facets can be presented in their entirety because of the uniqueness of each situation, the spatial limitations, and the unfoldment of knowledge which continues as institutions undertake the development of comprehensive cooperative education programs. However, the topics addressed in the following pages form a framework for implementing a cooperative plan, which can be built upon through individual consultation.

This project was carried out under the direction of Ralph C. Porter, Executive Vice President and Director of the National Commission for Cooperative Education, with John Dromgoole, Associate Director, serving as principal consultant and Claire B. Wright, Assistant Director, as editor. It has been made possible by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education and through the membership support of numerous colleges, universities, corporations, foundations, and labor.

In the paper on strategic planning stages in moving toward comprehensive cooperative higher education programs, four stages are identified and discussed. In stage one, the chief executive officer and the institutional constituencies make the key decision that a comprehensive cooperative education program is both feasible for the institution and consistent with its fundamental mission/philosophy. After the leadership of the institution makes this key decision, the organization defines strategic planning performance objectives consistent with the institution's fundamental mission/philosophy in stage two. These performance objectives are normally quantitative. Such performance objectives are a prerequisite to stage three, developing program and functional plans and budgets, i.e., the implementation plan/budget. The plans and budgets are developed to accomplish the performance objectives of stage two. After the detailed implementation plan/budget is completed, stage four begins: the implementation plan/budget is physically implemented. Implementation is the subject addressed in this paper.

Implementation is essentially putting into effect the programs and functional plans/budgets designed in stage three and in a manner that is consistent with the policy agreed upon. Some of the steps are sequential, but many consist of concurrent activities.

A first step in the implementation, if not already done, is to publish the philosophy of the program and the goals established for it by the planning group. The CEO speaking for the planning group would be an appropriate promulgator. Program goals might include the following:

- To help students better understand classroom learning through application in real life situations. The off campus cooperative job serves a purpose similar to the laboratory periods that are part of so many science courses. Through the application of theory and concepts in cooperative education projects, classroom learning is reinforced. Furthermore, the project environments are similar to situations encountered by students after graduation. Through observations in the applied situations, students will learn to inductively translate the observations to concepts and theories. Even in concentrations that do not have direct application to jobs in the sense that the engineering and science disciplines do, the purpose of education is to develop a mode of thinking — to motivate students to draw upon all of their learning and to see situations and events as part of the whole rather than as a series of unrelated courses. For history, philosophy, and other studies, the world off campus may offer the only laboratory. Furthermore, there are opportunities to return to the campus to clarify problems that are not fully understood and questions that may be raised in off campus jobs.

  In fact, to assure that this purpose is met, it is important that there is reflection on and feed back about the learning.
- To better prepare students for careers. Through the cooperative plan, students will be able to learn of occupations and careers, will come to understand the nature of the academic programs and work experiences necessary for careers that seem appropriate, and can test tentative career choices while there is still time to alter academic programs.

The planning group should be prepared to hold meetings for those who may not have become familiar with the cooperative plan during the stage II and III processes and who have questions not answered in the announcement.

Operating Procedure and Policies

The mechanics of the program's policies and operating procedures should be published for students, faculty and administrators on the campus and for employers off the campus.

Calendar and Course Scheduling

Once the calendar has been agreed upon, a number of subsystems personnel and the faculty will need to examine the calendar's implications for their operations. Among the subsystems affected will be the registrar, financial aid, admissions, and housing.

For the registrar, a calendar change will probably mean rewriting new computer programs, perhaps even changes in the data base itself. A year-round operation will mean changes in the times of the year when courses are scheduled and the frequency with which courses are offered. If the length of the classes is changed, it will affect room utilization. If courses are to be repackaged, descriptions must be rewritten. Financial aid and housing may also need to revise some of their policies.

The faculty, of course, will be profoundly affected. Courses may have to be repackaged and perhaps taught at different times. If the calendar developed in Stage III requires changes in course scheduling and course redesign, this should be initiated early in the program's development. Where it is possible, changes in scheduling should be tried on a pilot basis, even though students may not yet be enrolled in co-op. If, for instance, both halves of a two-unit course are to be taught in one term, the curriculum must be rewritten, and students can be scheduled in pilot sections for the rewritten curriculum if not across the board.

Where the dates of the semester or quarter are to be different, the institution would do well to move into these new dates even before students are available to participate in the cooperative program as part of the implementation.

Effecting changes at an early stage whenever possible will help to identify corrections that may be needed before full implementation. If the institution is to require co-op of all students, a rolling implementation would be a more feasible approach. That is, each incoming freshman class would become the next class to participate fully in the cooperative program. If it intends to maintain a traditional option while emphasizing extensive participation in the cooperative plan, a more rapid implementation can be realized if the institution's calendar and course schedules are geared to the needs of the cooperative education students, rather than to those following the traditional pattern.

In both alternating and parallel programs, it will most likely be necessary to implement a relatively full offering of courses in the summer. Because this operation can represent a substantial increase in faculty scheduling and hence costs, large colleges or universities may wish to extend cooperative education to only a portion of the institution each year. In addition to faculty, more professional support personnel will be needed in student affairs, financial aid, housing, the library, and recreational facilities.

Using Technical Assistance

Key administrators and faculty may obtain technical assistance in operating cooperative programs by hiring consultants or visiting other institutions to observe their programs and their impact on the campuses. In both instances, the consultants or the institutions must be appropriate for the purpose. The nature of the information sought should be clearly thought out, and the consultants to be hired or the institutions to be visited should be fully aware of the information which is needed. To identify appropriate consultants and institutions, campuses may contact the Cooperative Education Branch of the U.S. Department of Education, directors of the Centers conducting training and providing technical assistance, or the National Commission for Cooperative Education.

Orientation for Faculty and Administration

If not already part of the Stage III process, organizing orientations to inform faculty

and administrators of the cooperative education development should be one of the initial activities of the implementation. These two groups should learn about the implementation from those responsible rather than hear about it through rumors. In addition to the institution's own representatives, it will be helpful to bring in representatives from cooperative campuses similar to the implementing institution to discuss the impact of a substantial cooperative education program on a campus.

Marketing the Institution and its Cooperative Plan

The cooperative education marketing plan is designed to inform and promote the cooperative plan with all concerned groups. The promotion will include the purpose, benefits, implications and operation of the cooperative program. The following are the major groups to be reached:

- students
- guidance counselors
- parents
- employers
- alumni

Prior to designing the material, it is usually helpful to assess the "community's" impression of cooperative education as well as that of the implementing institution so the promotion can focus clearly on the questions and concerns of the different groups and emphasize the benefits of the program. While the promotional material will contain common information for all groups, it will be more effective if it can be designed to address the interests of each individual group to which it is being sent. News releases to student newspapers for instance will differ in their emphasis from those being sent to business and professional publications.

For each audience, the material must allay concerns, if any, and emphasize the program's benefits. Parents, for example, want their sons and daughters to get a sound and "practical" education, yet, many of these same parents experience anxiety if their sons and daughters leave school in order to work on their co-op assignments instead of remaining on the campus to complete their education as quickly as possible. Concerns such as these should be addressed in the material sent to parents and guidance counselors.

It will be helpful to hold special meetings for guidance counselors and employers. Guidance counselors will need a great deal of information about co-op and how it can be useful to all college students. They will also need frequent follow-up visits and material. Many believe co-op is for poor people and for marginal college students. Misconceptions of this nature can be corrected in the information sent to guidance counselors. Employers are generally quick to recognize the economic benefits of cooperative education when these are explained clearly. Opportunities are frequently available to address both groups at their professional meetings. It is also possible to bring these groups onto the campus for social types of orientation meetings. Newspaper features in the communities from which the institution draws or hopes to draw students are an effective media to reach all of the groups mentioned. It is quite appropriate to explain the benefits in a release sent to the journals and newsletters of professional organizations. Radio and TV spots, paid or public service, have also proven useful to many institutions.

Recruiting Students to the Campus

It is the responsibility of both the admissions and the cooperative education departments to exchange information on one another's activities. Co-op should supply facts and anecdotes about cooperative education. Co-op may wish to do job

development in areas where admissions recruits successfully. Information on students working in the areas where the institution recruits is useful to admissions in their effort with parents and high school guidance counselors.

Student Recruitment and Participation Policies

Recruiting students is one of cooperative education's most constant activities in the initial stages of program development on campuses where participation in cooperative education is optional. Even on campuses where cooperative education is required, it is still helpful to promote it with the student body so that resistance to a "requirement" is minimized.

Some factors that will influence the effectiveness of the on-campus recruiting include the following:

- Where cooperative education is optional, the institution will find that student participation in the early stages will depend to a great extent on the encouragement provided by the faculty.
- Those enrolling in an institution because of its cooperative plan should be contacted soon after they register in order to reinforce their interest.
- Job information, learning opportunities, and salaries must be presented frankly and clearly. Misconceptions are a frequent outcome of overly enthusiastic promotion.
- While most cooperative educators recognize that the real justification for cooperative education is in the learning to be acquired, the earning possibilities will often be more attractive to students in early discussions and in other promotional activity. Caution must be used, however, as students participating only for money will frequently seek out the best paying jobs and ignore some better learning experiences.
- In addition to the faculty's encouragement, the program staff will find that the use of articles and advertisements in the student newspapers, spots on the campus radio and TV stations, and posters in strategic locations such as the dining areas, the library, and department offices are important parts of the recruiting effort.
- Individual mailings can be sent to students to inform them about cooperative education. If students are given information about cooperative education through the material sent to freshmen and advance standing students, they will be familiar with the program prior to reporting to the campus, and this knowledge may increase their interest in participating.
- Satisfied students are the best public relations of all. Once the campus has had some experience with cooperative education, students will talk about their experiences and the learning they have acquired. Most will be willing to speak at orientation meetings and student groups about cooperative education. Most important, students will emphasize experience and learning over the financial aspects.

If selective criteria have been established for student participation, this should be made clear in the promotional material. Students will be unnecessarily annoyed if they apply to the program and are turned down because of an inadequate grade point average or for some other reason. If the requirements for the program or for specific jobs are very selective, an individual mailing to qualified students will often prove effective. This is especially true if cooperative education is recognized as a selective program.

In the long term, participation in cooperative education should be open to all. Oftentimes students who have not decided on their majors or who are academically marginal are those who can most benefit from cooperative education.

As soon as students have applied to the program it is important that a systematic process for connecting them with jobs be initiated so that they are confident something is happening to make them part of the program.

Students banned from participating in other campus activities may be subject to review relative to their eligibility for cooperative education. Standing committees that pass on eligibility for participation in campus programs may be the most appropriate to review questions of eligibility for cooperative education.

There may be reasons for establishing matriculation requirements and prerequisites for participation. It is better to have uniform, institution-wide policies rather than a variety of requirements specified by departments. Institution-wide policy will minimize confusion. Policies common to all departments will enable students to move from one department to another. Most cooperative programs have found it helpful to require students to complete the freshman year before entering cooperative jobs. They are more mature, and employers believe that the more advanced students are better prepared for work experience. Some institutions require advance standing students to be in residence for a minimum period prior to their participation in co-op. This permits them to be assimilated into the campus and to establish a grade point average.

The number of terms in which a student is expected to work should also be defined. When not operating under federal funding there is no minimum number of terms. Students in alternating programs may find the experience to be more productive if they can work two consecutive semesters rather than two alternating since employers are more inclined to provide greater responsibilities. However, with longer commitments, there are fewer opportunities to explore different occupation and career areas, without extending the time for graduation. Students who start co-op after the freshman year can generally participate in at least three off-campus work experiences and still graduate in a total of four years in both alternating and parallel programs.

Hiring a Director and Staffing the Program

If a director was not hired in time to help design the program, another first step in the implementation stage is to identify and employ someone for that position.

Some of the following criteria should be considered in the hiring decision:

- An ability to work with individuals from the areas that are involved with cooperative education. In addition to students, this includes faculty, administrators, employers, and funding sources.
- An awareness of the different ways in which experience can be designed to maximize learning.
- Administrative talent, i.e., qualities such as accurate empathy, the ability to communicate effectively, persuasiveness, orderly thinking, firmness, and flexibility.

The director (and the coordinators) may be recruited from the faculty or from occupations outside of education. If a respected member of the faculty is chosen as the director, the campus will have more confidence in the program's educational emphasis. Furthermore, if the director comes from an underloaded department and will not be replaced, there is no net increase in the personnel costs for the campus. This value also holds true for coordinators who are recruited from the faculty ranks.

Hiring and Training the Staff

While the coordinators and staff need not come from the faculty, those employed should recognize that their primary role is that of an educator. Their responsibilities require them to be empathic listeners, persuasive salespeople, teachers, and adminis-

trators. Whether they come from education, business, industry, or government, those employed should at least demonstrate a potential for these qualities. They too should be employed through the selection process for professional level personnel.

It is helpful if the staff is employed early enough to participate in Phase III. An understanding of the rationale that went into the development of policies and procedures facilitates their assimilation into the cooperative education process.

If they are all tenured faculty who were persuaded to accept the role of a non-traditional educator, their training will be more concentrated in career development, selling, counseling, and the role of the non-traditional educator. Underutilized faculty who can perceive themselves as non-traditional educators can be ideal candidates for the job of a coordinator. Caution is needed though to be sure that the cooperative program does not become the resting place for those who have already given their best years. If the staff represents non-academic occupations they will need an orientation in the role of the coordinator as an educator.

The staffing of cooperative programs is related to a number of considerations. Counseling liberal arts students generally requires more time than that needed for students in professional programs such as engineering, because the liberal arts students are less career directed. Job development also tends to be more time consuming for liberal arts students in that employers may need more selling than that required for students in the professional programs. The liberal arts job file will need more jobs per student placed because of the more diverse interests of the students and their desire to change jobs frequently. Coordinators on rural campuses, distant from large cities and employment bases, will spend more time traveling to develop jobs and visit employers than those in urban environments.

In the first year of the program's development, a student placement load for a liberal arts coordinator might be no more than 50 students while that of an engineering coordinator could be 60-75 students. The loads will also vary according to factors as diverse as the experience of the coordinators, assistance given by the faculty, and the prestige or reputation of the institution. The coordinator who is a successful telephone salesperson or who is able to incorporate other time savers into the job can serve more students while carrying out his/her responsibilities more effectively.

Coordinators, depending upon their experience, will need training in:

- Counseling and career information, so that they will be prepared to help students focus clearly on career interests and the academic programs that will prepare them for their career choices;
- Exploring with students the job getting and job keeping skills needed to further their careers;
- Marketing cooperative education with employers: learning the art of generating leads, becoming sensitive to employers needs, and closing a sale;
- Using learning objectives and contracts to help students focus on the learning potential of their off-campus work experiences;
- Developing and using a management information system so that the program is operated effectively and its impact is understood.

Much of the training can be obtained in reputable training programs, but training will also have to be done at the institution by the director.

Just as faculty development is an ongoing activity, the development of the coordinator staff is never complete. Such development may be largely an on campus activity, but it is also important that coordinators have opportunities to share ideas and learn from others in the field of cooperative education by attending conferences and workshops related to their work and level of development.

Registering Students for Cooperative Education

Where credit is awarded, students will be registered in a course, generally a coopera-

tive education course with discipline or departmental designations. A problem may arise in programs not awarding credit in that students may not be registered. Students working off the campus and not taking courses may be withdrawn for non-attendance. This usually results in their medical coverage being cancelled and loans, if any, coming due. For these as well as for other reasons, students should be registered even if credit courses do not need to be used.

In both alternating and parallel programs, but more often in the latter, some students will remain on their co-op jobs after the first term without registering for cooperative education and thus they avoid paying tuition for the co-op credit. While this behavior generally does not result in an income loss to the institution, since FTEs or tuition collected for cooperative education credit represents a transfer of income rather than net income, there are other negative results:

- Some cooperative programs are expected to generate credit as a means of demonstrating their worth.
- The cooperative program will be perceived as a placement office rather than a contributor to the educational process. In time, it will lose faculty support and visibility on the campus.
- Another concern is that the outcomes of the cooperative program may not be fully realized. If, in fact, the program provides education, motivation to persist, and funds to keep some students in school who might otherwise drop-out, these outcomes should be known. But this will not be so if students do not register for cooperative education. Full knowledge is essential to good management.

It would not seem unduly coercive to require students who remained in their jobs to register for cooperative education, whether or not for credit. The rationale for such a requirement might go this way:

- It was the efforts made by the staff to convince employers to provide meaningful, paid employment that have produced jobs that are both educational experiences and sources of financial assistance. In a sense, the jobs belong to the school. The cooperative staff are the "finders."
- The liaison and supervision performed by the faculty and staff move employers to continue to provide these experiences and to improve them. Where students are working but not registered or perceived to be in the cooperative plan, the program's liaison with employers may be discontinued. When this liaison falls off, so does the quality of the experience. Employers will begin to think of the job as only a source of income for students rather than as an educational experience.

To carry out this policy the following may be necessary:

- The school must diligently maintain its supervision and its communication with employers.
- Complete employer loyalty must be gained. Employers should recognize that if they do not support the school's position, they cannot be assured of services when they need them. In the long term, close cooperation and mutual support will serve the employer's needs more effectively. The employers believe the program is valuable to them, but that is largely due to the services provided by the school.
- The quality of students, their preparation for work, and the service to the employers cannot be permitted to erode.
- A strong job development effort should always be in force. Cooperative enrollments may also fall off if some students do not find the cooperative jobs they were led to believe existed by the promotional efforts of the department.
- If the slowing of the program's momentum is due to a falling off in staff enthusiasm and resilience, which can and does happen quite frequently in coopera-

tive education, it is necessary for the leadership to assess the cause and take steps to reverse the situation.

Employment Program

The employment program is that activity which includes job development, employer liaison, and placement. Decisions made in Stage III will provide direction and guidance in administering the employment program. The decisions will include:

- The extent to which jobs are study-related and/or are in occupations and career areas in which students may find success after graduation.
- The circumstances under which students will normally be required to return to the same jobs rather than to change jobs and employers.
- The number of semesters that students must commit in order to participate in co-op whether in parallel or alternating programs.
- The emphasis placed on alternating as opposed to consecutive work semesters.
- The means that will be used to continue students on the co-op rolls who remain with their co-op jobs but choose not to register for co-op.
- The division of responsibilities for job development and employer maintenance and liaison.
- The employer's responsibilities to students and to the institution.

Some in cooperative education believe that all jobs should be study-related and that placement periods should alternate on a regular basis with on-campus periods of school. In the curriculum where cooperative education was first developed, engineering, there was a good rationale for this philosophy. Most engineering students become engineers, and engineering jobs provide opportunities for students to apply their learning quite directly. The analogy hardly holds true for students in the liberal arts, especially the humanities where few students pursue careers which are extensions of their undergraduate majors and where few study-related responsibilities are available. The cooperative program may serve the career needs of liberal arts students more effectively if a number of jobs are developed in areas in which liberal arts graduates have been able to develop careers. These include journalism and communication such as radio and TV, company publications and public relations; medicine and health delivery systems; law and the criminal justice system; banking, insurance, and investments; business and industry; municipal, state and federal government; ecology and environmental protection; and human services. Many occupations in these fields can offer entry level jobs for liberal arts cooperative education students and graduates. While providing experience, these jobs permit students to learn of potential occupations and careers which may be open to them. They also cause students to become more aware of the courses they should take to enhance their employability. Nevertheless, job development for study-related positions in the liberal arts should not be neglected, for most students want these experiences, and also the faculty tends to be more supportive of study-related work. One of the difficulties with concentrating on study-related jobs in the social sciences and the humanities is their relative scarcity for both undergraduates and graduates. Many professional jobs in fields such as history, sociology, etc., require a Ph.D.

However, job development for students in the professional studies should be aimed at study-related work. Students in these programs are less involved in career exploration. While some, as a result of their work experience or other reasons, may change their career choice, most will continue their undergraduate programs into careers related to their majors. Furthermore, study-related jobs for students in the professional programs are more readily developed and tend to provide sound growth opportunities.

For certain kinds of experiences in the liberal arts, the fine arts, and in education, it may be necessary for students to work on a volunteer basis; but as a rule, volunteer experiences are less representative of the world off the campus than paid employment in terms of demanding responsibility, initiative, and accountability. While some employers need volunteer help, most recognize the advantages of paying their employees, and they will prefer to pay whenever they can. If the college can offer a reliable source of help, paid jobs can be developed in many agencies which utilize large numbers of volunteers from other sources.

Continuity of students and job coverage are important to employers. The longer the students work for an employer, even if not in the same job, and the more continuous the coverage, the greater is the likelihood of obtaining positions entailing learning and responsibility. While employers can often provide jobs that are not covered continuously, it is expensive for them to do so with responsible positions. To obtain hard-to-get graduates such as engineers, employers will accept less coverage and continuity. They are less likely to do so for liberal arts students at this point in time.

It may be helpful to develop two files of jobs: one for students who wish to make longer term commitments in order to get in-depth experience; another file for project work and peak load or cyclical jobs that may terminate at the end of one or two semesters and for which the employer may even prefer short-term student help since termination of the project does not result in the payment of high unemployment benefits.

While there are advantages to alternating work and school, and while under federal support it is required, two consecutive work semesters such as summer and fall, spring and summer, etc. can often result in better experiences than might be provided for shorter term alternating students. Summer is sometimes a poor time to start a new job since more students may be working then and most employers tend to be short of supervisory help.

Job development can be done by anyone who is so inclined, but most programs find that a full-time staff responsible for job development, counseling, and placement is most effective. The staff is more sensitive to employer needs and more familiar with students as well as with job potentials. The advantage of faculty job developers, however, is their tendency to place great emphasis on the learning potential of the experience, but some may not be interested or may not have the time to devote.

The cooperative education staff has a responsibility to maintain good communication with employers. Employers need information about students who are coming and going, feedback relative to the student's view of the employer's programs, and other information helpful to employers.

There are advantages to letting students find their own jobs since that is their responsibility when they graduate. However, if the campus assumes this responsibility they can control the quality of jobs and better assure all students of having an appropriate experience. If students can find jobs equal to or better than the program's, they should be permitted to do so, providing that the institution can meet its commitments. The job finding experience helps to develop coping skill, and these independently found jobs may later become available to the program.

While no employer is obligated to hire co-op students, once an employer does do so he/she accepts certain responsibilities. These include:

- providing the best experience and supervision possible
- being willing and available to communicate with the campus staff and to provide feedback about students' progress
- being willing to review students' performance with them.

The development of an employment program consists of several activities which will occur concurrently. In addition to creating promotional material and attracting

students, the employment program must:

- create a job bank
- develop a placement process
- organize an orientation to prepare students for work
- establish a sound liaison system with employers

Creating a Job Bank

The job bank is the resource to which students and coordinators look for the most appropriate experience. Creating a job bank or files starts with identifying the disciplines for which jobs are needed, the kinds of experiences that are appropriate, and the employers able to provide these experiences. The Department of Labor's *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, the College Placement Council's *College Placement Annual*, and other publications provide a considerable amount of information describing occupations for different disciplines and the employers utilizing these disciplines. The *College Placement Annual* provides names, addresses, and telephone numbers of persons to contact in several hundred firms and government agencies. Once the staff is familiar with the needs of employers, the Yellow Pages can be used to develop leads.

Developing the job file entails the following steps:

- Organize a list of leads or employers to be contacted.
- Send a letter concisely describing the program along with promotional material which will provide more detailed information about benefits, operations, etc. No mailing should be larger than the number that can be followed up with telephone calls and/or visits within a period of two or three weeks. The letter should indicate that the coordinator will contact the employer. Do not wait for an employer response. Most will not reply, although a few may.
- Call for appointments to visit. It is often easier to obtain the appointment through the secretary of the person to whom the letter was addressed. In some instances it may be quite possible to do job development over the phone. It saves both time and money for the institution and the employer. A few schools have done this quite successfully.
- The visit or telephone call is a sales presentation. Prior to these visits instruction in selling may be necessary. Role playing in cooperative education sales calls is also very helpful.
- During the visit or telephone call the coordinator must listen for employer needs and show how the co-op program meets these needs. Every effort should be made to get the employer to make a positive decision.
- Keeping a file of all activities is essential to maintaining order in the job development process. Calls, visits, replies and outcomes must all be recorded.
- Where the visits or telephone calls result in a job, the description of the job, the potential learning, and all student requirements as well as the name and address, telephone number, pay, and a description of the employer's product or service should be written on an appropriate form and a copy sent to the employer. Misunderstandings as to what is agreed upon happen even with this double checking.
- Prior to sending students to an employer, it is important that supervisors have a clear understanding of the institution's objectives for the program. This may require meetings with employer supervisors to explain the objectives of the program and the way it operates. This is especially important in cases where the persons with whom the jobs were negotiated are not the supervisors.

- Keep employers informed of the efforts and the progress being made in sending students. They expect something to happen, and if they hear nothing they may turn elsewhere for help. Sometimes employers cannot wait, and the campus needs to know if the job is no longer available so that others can be developed.
- As a rule, jobs can be sought and interest developed prior to students being available. However, employers should be told if there will be a considerable lapse of time before they can access students.
- Confirmed jobs should be entered into the job file or job bank.
- Employers expressing interest but not providing jobs should be contacted periodically.

The Placement Process: Connecting Students and Jobs

Informing students about jobs can be done through job posting and computer terminals or in individual sessions with students. Providing access to the job file permits some self screening, and it is a learning process for students and a time saver for the staff. Students are quite realistic about the jobs for which they will apply.

A coordinator has a responsibility to employers to dissuade students from applying for jobs for which they are clearly not qualified. If they insist, the coordinator can alert the employer that of the group of students applying there is one who would not normally be referred. In this way the coordinator is informing the employer that the institution is aware of the employer's requirements and that attempts were made to send only qualified students. It is not necessary to identify the student in question. Often enough that person is employed and becomes a successful employee.

By discussing jobs individually with students, the coordinator is better able to control the referrals, but some students will feel resentment upon hearing of jobs through other students for which they believed they were qualified but not referred.

Employers should always be contacted prior to referring students. In addition to keeping the employer informed, this notice will avoid embarrassment to the coordinator and irritation to the student if the job has been altered or discontinued.

As a rule, it is a good learning experience and more efficient for students to contact the employers for interviews. Students should arrange their interviews as soon as possible after being referred so that those not hired can quickly be referred to other positions. Once they have been hired, they should not be considered for nor permitted to apply for other jobs.

One of the forms discussed in the form section of this chapter is a self-addressed postcard with the name, address, and telephone number of the employer. This card serves as a means to introduce the student to the employer as one referred by the institution. Employers indicate their decisions and return the cards to the institution.

The interview should be recognized as a two-way screening process. Students should also be able to refuse the arrangement, just as employers can reject students.

If a student should fail to obtain a job after several interviews, the reasons should be obtained from the interviewers and the student counseled as to what he/she might do differently. Only under the most unusual circumstances should a student be viewed as "unplaceable".

Maintaining Employer Relations

Periodic visits should be made with supervisors, perhaps once per term for those within a reasonable distance. There are several purposes for these meetings:

- Employers want feedback about the employment program they are providing.

- Information can be obtained in visits which employers may not wish to write on evaluation forms to which students have access.
- Visits reflect the institution's interest in making sure the program is beneficial to both students and employers. The visits help to maintain the employer's conscientiousness.
- Visits provide opportunities to reinforce the institution's objectives for cooperative education.

In summary, the visits are the public relations efforts to which any service organization should remain sensitive. It reflects an interest in the well-being of students and employers. When coordinators stop visiting, there frequently is a dropping off in employer interest and the quality of experiences provided. Students also perceive the coordinators visits as a conscientious effort by the institution to maintain effective programs.

Counseling and Preparation for Work

Counseling, whether done on an individual basis or in small groups, is done prior and subsequent to the work experience for several reasons:

- Students and coordinators become acquainted in the counseling sessions. Coordinators are able to learn of the students' interests and needs, and the sessions provide the coordinators with opportunities to earn the students' confidence.
- Counseling sessions are used to help students focus more clearly on their career interests. In these sessions, the coordinator can provide information about the occupations and careers in which students have expressed interest and/or refer students to career information resources.
- Counseling can be used to help students recognize the need for change and to help them achieve those changes.
- Additionally, counseling is needed subsequent to the work experience. It is not enough to send students out to work, it is also important to help them recognize the extent of the learning acquired in their work experiences and the implications of that learning for their career plans and academic programs.

Preparation for Work

Orientations with students are essential prior to their beginning the co-op employment program. While not all inclusive, the orientations should cover at least the following:

- The purpose of cooperative education, the program's policies and procedures, the institution's expectations of students, and that which students can expect or to which they are entitled from the institution;
- An orientation to work to include employer responsibilities, student responsibilities to the employer and the institution, and ways to maximize the value of the work experiences;
- An exploration of job getting and job holding skills. Included in this portion of the orientation is value assessment (self analysis), resume design, letter writing, interviewing techniques, interpersonal relations in the workplace, and discussions of the relationships of work habits and work values to career success.

Academic Credit

Granting credit for work learning serves a number of purposes, some of which are the following:

- it involves the faculty who will generally help to identify the learning objectives and evaluate the learning,
- it helps students to focus on what is to be learned and requires them to become active learners,
- it emphasizes cooperative education as a learning program rather than as a work and jobs program,
- employers may be more conscientious when credit is granted for work learning and they are part of the process,
- it increases student participation in the cooperative education program.

In granting credit, there are a number of issues that will need to be resolved. These would include:

- will credit be awarded for learning or for experience,
- will credit in cooperative education projects be awarded only for study related learning or will credit be awarded for the acquisition of coping skills and personal growth,
- who will award the credit,
- what will be the credentializing process,
- how can the intellectual content and level of learning be assessed.

As a rule, credit in four year programs is awarded for learning rather than for time put in or for the experience itself. Where credit is learning based, a learning agreement is used with specific learning objectives. Often, these are outlined under the direction of the coordinator and formalized with a faculty advisor. Learning objectives generally include a predominance of study related objectives but will often include objectives related to understanding the politics of the organization, how to work within it, and progress in developing work habits and values.

At the time the learning objectives are completed, it is desirable to specify the process for evaluating the learning. The evaluation process will depend upon the objectives, the nature of the project, and the learning to be acquired. For instance, if the project is a study of political activities and the role of individuals in a political campaign, a report describing the student's activities and what he/she did in a campaign might form the basis for evaluating the learning. If the project were to focus upon the role of political campaigns in electing candidates, the term paper might be a conceptualization of the political process and an analysis of what works and does not. The evaluation can be in the form of a competency exam or the working of a mathematic or economic model.

Utilizing learning objectives over time based learning establishes more credibility for awarding credit since there is an attempt to measure both intellectual content and the level of the learning, i.e., lower level and upper level learning.

As a rule, the study related learning will be assessed by the faculty. The politics of the organization and other coping skills may be assessed by the coordinators or the employer. Employers should have some input as to the student's learning because they are the most knowledgeable in assessing certain aspects of the student's growth, such as work habits, values, and coping skills. Furthermore, if they perceive themselves as participants in the student's education, they are more inclined to provide better supervision of the experience.

Where credit is awarded by an academic department, that department should receive credit for that effort. If the number of students involved in cooperative education projects is sufficiently great, some faculty members may be released from courses or paid overloads for their time. The cost of the off-campus credit should not be more than the cost of on-campus credit.

Forms and Records

Collecting and analyzing data relative to the operation of the cooperative program is

essential to its organization, its smooth operation, and an understanding of its impact upon students, the campus, and the community. Every effort should be made to collect the information only once. Computer storage will facilitate its being reproduced for different purposes rather than requiring duplicate collections. Some of the following data will be needed continuously:

- Information on students applying to the cooperative education program, including name, address, class, major, previous experience, goals etc.;
- Information on students enrolled in the cooperative education program;
- Information on students available for placement;
- Information on students returning to jobs and on students leaving jobs;

All of these purposes will require some common elements of data collection. If gathered and stored properly, one collection is all that is needed.

Information on employees is also needed, such as:

- Names, addresses, telephone numbers, salary and pay scales;
- Job descriptions;
- Learning possibilities;
- Student requirements;
- Students referred;
- Students hired;
- Students returning and students leaving.

Other kinds of information such as the stage of learning contracts development and the number of credits earned is also necessary.

Forms must be developed to:

- Introduce students to employers
- Enable employers to write evaluations
- Permit students to describe their jobs
- Permit students to petition for exceptions

This list of necessary information is only partially complete. Each program may have unique information needs, and the above is the minimum that will be required. The nature of the information that is required will determine the appropriate forms for collection and storage. Information can be fed directly into a data base and stored without using forms for collection and storage, but as a rule this is not practical. The facilities of the institution will to some degree determine the methods for collecting and storing information.

In addition to the needs basic to the department's operation, there is considerably more information that is needed for management to be effective and for the institution to have a good understanding of the program's effectiveness in achieving its goals.

The cooperative education staff should collect information about its operations and publish that which relates to student learning outcomes; post graduation outcomes; and benefits to the students and faculty, the institution, and the community. Some information will be published campus wide while other will be for management use only. The following is a partial list of information that is useful for management purposes:

- the number of students in cooperative education and that number as a percentage of all students;
- the number of students applying for jobs and the number and percentage of those students who are placed;
- the number of job development visits and calls made and the number of these contacts that resulted in jobs and placements.

The abovementioned item on job development should be applied to each individual staff member and the data used for management guidance and employee development.

Cost information is especially important as a means of comparing costs in cooperative education with costs in laboratory courses and other similar programs. The following should be considered:

- the cost per student placed;
- the cost per student served (counseled, etc.) but not placed;
- the cost per placement per coordinator;
- the cost per credit hour.

The credit hour cost is partially based on the method used to compensate the faculty. The cost will generally be lower than classroom credit costs if the faculty's participation is paid as an overlead. A head count can result in higher or lower costs than in line load depending upon amount paid per student. Costs are discussed in more detail in another section of this publication.

For general distribution, the following statistics will be useful in determining the value and impact of the cooperative program:

- student participation in the program by college, major, and year;
- student's reasons for participating in the cooperative program;
- the nature of the jobs sought and those in which students are placed;
- the reasons students applying are not placed;
- the number and percentage of students participating in the cooperative plan who complete their education (persistence);
- the academic standing of co-op students compared to all students (for selective programs this will not be meaningful);
- the number of inquiries compared to placements, according to major;
- placement by geographic area;
- the post-graduate outcomes of co-op students compared to non-co-op students.

Relationships with Other Departments

To smooth the path of cooperative education and to help the campus realize its potential value to the students, the faculty, and the institution, open communication with other groups on the campus is essential.

Admissions and the cooperative education staff can both gain by an ongoing exchange. Information about cooperative experiences and post-graduation outcomes are good grist for the admissions mill. Knowledge of high demand job markets may influence the choice of areas in which admissions decides to recruit. Knowledge of good recruiting markets can and perhaps even should influence the areas in which the cooperative staff does some of its job development.

Financial aid is another area which can be very helpful to the cooperative plan. While co-op is not primarily a financial aid program, the earnings are important to all students. Cooperative education income and experiences can be most important to art students, for instance, whose after graduation salaries tend to be so low that borrowing in college is discouraged. Since many of these students stop out from school periodically to earn money, cooperative education may be able to provide better stop outs.

The cooperative staff needs to know how earnings affect financial aid, and financial aid must be familiar with changes in the regulations such as the use of work-study money and the regulations concerning the impact on aid programs where co-op earnings are not treated as financial aid.

The office of the registrar is another area with which the cooperative staff should work and maintain ongoing communications so that ways may be found to smooth the transition from school to the cooperative job and back to school. A reporting system that keeps track of all students is essential. Students should be registered

while on their cooperative education work periods if for no other reasons than to keep their medical coverage in effect and to prevent loans from becoming due.

The public relations and alumni offices will be helpful if they can supply information on various firms and alumni who might be able to hire cooperative students. Cooperative education placements and related information are good input to alumni group meetings and can fortify requests to industrial foundations for support. Since most firms cannot give to all colleges applying for assistance, knowledge of a cooperative education relationship and its benefits to the firm may count heavily in a firm's decision on which institution to assist.

The Role of the Faculty

The faculty's support and involvement in the cooperative program can make the difference between its being a means to complement the education of a significant number of students and its merely being an employment and financial aid program for a few. Because of the faculty's broad influence with students, their involvement assures a learning emphasis, and their support results in much greater student participation.

To obtain the faculty's assistance in making the cooperative plan an effective learning device, at least the following is needed:

- The program's credibility must be established by those at the highest level.
- The cooperative plan should be initiated for educationally sound reasons.
- From the time the decision is made to examine cooperative education, members of the faculty should be included in the development of the program.
- The faculty must be kept well informed of the program's operations.
- The faculty's role in the cooperative education program should be defined, and they should have input in determining this role.
- The faculty's concerns should be recognized, and steps should be taken to alleviate those concerns whenever possible.

The faculty's participation will facilitate some of the change that is needed to assure the educational soundness of the program and to see that it is appropriate for all students.

Faculty support is important to several aspects of program development. Implementing cooperative education requires many changes on the campus. Included are calendar, curriculum, and scheduling changes, but the most essential change is an attitudinal change. The faculty will be more inclined to support change when they see the need for the program.

The faculty has a great influence on the student body. Although not primarily responsible for promoting the program, a supportive faculty can result in more students participating in cooperative education. In their official and unofficial advising capacity, the faculty is frequently aware of their students' career concerns.

If the faculty is supportive of co-op's career development potential, they will encourage students to explore cooperative education and to participate in it.

Where jobs are distant from the campus, the faculty will be instrumental in encouraging students to seek the best opportunities rather than merely those that are most convenient or pay the best.

Where credit is to be awarded for work-learning, it is important that faculty be involved in the credit-granting process. The initial efforts needed to help students establish learning objectives can start with the cooperative education staff, but they must be completed with the advice of the faculty advisor.

Some and perhaps many faculty will be involved to a degree in advising students, in the identification of learning objectives, in the evaluation of the learning, and perhaps in the supervision of students. The latter, while valuable, can be time

consuming and expensive in terms of time and travel costs. Through the employer contacts that go with the supervision, however, the faculty will have a better appreciation of employer views and the relationship of education to employer needs. The faculty will learn of:

- the skills and training employers seek in entry and upper level positions,
- ways to improve the effectiveness of their teaching and the curriculum to prepare students for careers, and
- ways to relate their teaching and subjects to the needs of society in order to make their education more relevant to the world off the campus.

The cooperative education staff has a major role in gaining faculty support. First and foremost, the staff must gain the respect of the faculty. This will be influenced by the caliber of the staff that is retained and the professionalism with which they carry out their responsibilities. They must also keep the deans of the colleges and the faculty fully informed of the program's activities. This would include providing information on the numbers of students applying and placed, the nature of the placements, outcomes for students in terms of study related learning and career choices, and the persistence of students participating in the cooperative program as compared to those who do not participate. The staff should send information to each department relative to the placement of students in that department. Whenever possible, the staff should strive to alleviate any problems or concerns students have in participating, such as registering for courses, since these difficulties are not only problems to students but concerns to the faculty.

Organizing and Using An Advisory Committee

The purpose of a cooperative education advisory committee is to help provide direction to the program's administrator by anticipating the impact that the program's operation will have on the various segments of the academic community. If it is representative of the institution, it can also help to gain acceptance for and participation in the program from the segments of the institution that are represented on the committee.

On most campuses it is suggested that the advisory committee consist of representatives from the administration, the faculty, the student body, the employers, and the cooperative education staff. The faculty representatives should be chosen most carefully. They should be sensitive to the concerns of the various faculty groups on the campus so that actions likely to offend any of the groups can either be avoided or, if they are necessary, they can be explained ahead of time and efforts made to soften their impact.

Including students will help the entire campus community to keep abreast of student views. Their input will also help the staff to take steps for which they might not otherwise have seen a need.

On all advisory committees, it may be helpful to include employers. Through the committee, employers can give the campus information about businesses' needs and provide a realistic assessment of what the employers can do for the cooperative program. It might even be possible, through the committee, to get some employers to explore with other employers their reluctance in hiring liberal arts students and those from other hard-to-place majors.

The various groups can also promote the program with their constituencies. Certainly if the faculty representatives are influential faculty members, their participation alone will lend credence to the program. Furthermore, the advisory committee representatives can be instrumental during faculty meetings in explaining the controversial aspects of the program and obtaining acceptance for the program and its policies. A corresponding value can be obtained from students and employers.

Summary

Among the implementation areas considered in this paper are the following:

- Publicizing the decision and the plan to adopt a comprehensive cooperative education program
- Designing the calendar and scheduling courses
- Seeking technical assistance
- Orienting the faculty and the administration
- Marketing the institution and its cooperative program
- Recruiting students to the campus
- Recruiting students to the cooperative education program
- Setting criteria for student participation in cooperative education programs
- Hiring the director and staffing the program
- Hiring and training the staff
- Determining registration procedures
- Establishing an employment program
- Developing jobs
- Creating a job bank
- The placement process: connecting students and jobs
- Maintaining employer relations
- Counseling and preparing students for work
- Awarding academic credit
- Developing and maintaining forms and records
- Building relationships with other departments
- Building relationships with faculty
- Organizing and using an advisory committee.

In the preceding pages, some guidelines have been given for putting into effect the stage three implementation plan/budget. Through this implementation plan, the performance objectives of stage two can be met, which will realize the institution's key strategic decision to develop a large scale comprehensive cooperative education program.

The National Commission for Cooperative Education's series on comprehensive program development includes the following publications:

A Positive Future for Cooperative Education — an interview with Dr. J.W. Peltason, President of the American Council on Education

Developing a Comprehensive Cooperative Education Program:

Strategic Planning Stages

Implementing the Plan

Building A Consensus

Evaluating Market Opportunities

The Consultation Process

Management Information Systems